



**Mayor**  
Oscar Leeser

**City Council**

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*District 2*  
Jim Tolbert

*District 3*  
Emma Acosta

*District 4*  
Carl L. Robinson

*District 5*  
Dr. Michiel R. Noe

*District 6*  
Claudia Ordaz

*District 7*  
Lily Limón

*District 8*  
Cortney C. Niland

**City Manager**  
Tommy Gonzalez

February 28, 2017

Ms. Emily Sparks  
International City/County Management Association  
777 North Capitol St. NE, Ste. 500  
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Ms. Sparks,

I am writing to express commitment and interest in participating in the SolSmart program offered by the Department of Energy. The City of El Paso is known as the Sun City due in part to the fact that we enjoy as many as 297 days of sunshine a year. As a thriving desert city we are keenly aware of the need to manage our natural resources through conservation and innovation. We are also a community that recognizes the potential of the renewable energy industry as an economic driver. As a community that is 78% Latino with a median age of 32 and a median household income of \$39,195, innovative technologies and new industry clusters have the potential to expand career and income opportunity for residents of El Paso.

Through the recently formed Regional Renewable Energy Advisory Council, El Paso has set goals to support renewable energy industry jobs leveraging solar as a major source of energy for our community. In September 2011, thanks to the legislative work of Texas Senator Jose Rodriguez, our City Council and the community of El Paso, the State of Texas passed a law permitting net metering in the Sun City. This action spurred growth of solar options and consumer uptake across the city. As of 2016 there are approximately 2,000 solar installations, citywide. El Paso, and the region, is served by a regulated investor-owned utility, El Paso Electric Company (EPE). It too is committed to promoting solar energy and are implementing a subscription solar community option for the region.

The El Paso community would greatly benefit from the guidance and technical assistance the SolSmart program provides. Our city is committed to reducing soft costs associated with solar energy and streamlining the permitting and inspection processes of solar installations. Participating in the SolSmart program will allow us to track key metrics and to implement recommendations that make solar energy more accessible to the entire community. The Sun City is ready to leverage the potential of our community and the power of our sunshine in support of a healthy and prosperous future. The Sun City is eager to contribute to the worldwide energy renaissance!

We look forward to working with the experienced leaders and advisors of SolSmart. If you have any further questions, please contact my office.

Sincerely,

Oscar Leeser  
Mayor, City of El Paso